



The Asian Classics Institute



Diamond Mountain University

Name:
Date:
Location:
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Grade:

### IN-DEPTH COURSE III

#### Master Shantideva's Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life Exploring the Border Between You and Me

#### Answer Key, Class Seven

1) Master Shantideva at this point in the chapter says that we should "practice the attitudes of jealousy, competitiveness, and pride." Explain, first of all, how we do this.

**The idea is that we put ourselves in the body (in our culture we often say "in the shoes") of another person. Then we look at ourselves with the same "sick" emotions that we ourselves usually have when we look at others: jealous if we are now lower than ourselves; competitive if we are now at the same level as ourselves; and proud if we are now higher than ourselves.**

2) Now explain how Master Prajnyakara Mati justifies practicing these negative attitudes.

**About this verse, Master Prajnyakara Mati says that—in general—the attitudes of jealousy, competitiveness, and pride are something which would only increase the suffering side of our life. Here though we can transform them into something which would only increase the enlightened side of our life. We do so by another kind of transformation: by exchanging ourselves and others. Given all this, we should feel no hesitation or misgivings about practicing these negative attitudes here.**

3) So now you've exchanged yourself with another person. You are in their body, looking at your old you. Your old you is better or higher than your new you, in some way. Therefore new you is jealous of old you. What are six negative thoughts that the new us would typically be thinking now about old us? What do we, in our dark side, really want people to give us? What would it be nice for us to want for others?

**(1) People should honor him (or her), but not me. (2) No one should give me any gifts; they should give them all to him. (3) He should be praised, but I should be condemned. (4) He should be happy, and I should suffer. (5) I should have to do all the work, and he should relax. (6) He should become famous, and I should remain unknown.**

4) You are another person, looking at you, this extraordinary bodhisattva. How can you keep from getting discouraged, when you compare yourself with him or her?

**We shouldn't look at all their great qualities, and get discouraged thinking that we could never develop such qualities. We should look at their great qualities and get inspired to reach them ourselves. We can reflect upon how there do exist even more amazing beings than them; and we can reflect upon how there do exist some beings who seem to be even worse than ourselves. We can also reflect on how all of our troubles are coming to us due to the power of our negative thoughts, and not because we wanted them, through our own power. The words "our own power" here can also be read to refer to some "me" who is coming from my own side. The belief in *this* kind of me is the true source of all problems.**

5) Describe the heart-breaking moment when the other person realizes that we are not the great bodhisattva that they thought we were.

**This heart-breaking moment occurs in a verse and a half. First, in half a verse, the "other person" says to me, the great bodhisattva, "You take care of me, and I will also try with all my strength to take on, willingly, all the hard work and trouble needed to attain the kinds of good qualities that you have." Then, as Gyaltsab Je summarizes the following verse: "But you don't really seem to want to help us! Aren't we someone you should care for? If this is the way this great bodhisattva acts, with all of those supposedly great qualities, then who would ever want these great qualities? They don't help anyone!"**

6) Next we switch ourselves with others, and practice competitive thoughts. What are some of these thoughts?

**I will get more offerings and respect from others than this bodhisattva, even if I have to fight and cause trouble to do so. My good qualities should become something that everybody hears about, and his should remain unknown.**